

OLD TESTAMENT FORM CRITICISM RECONSIDERED

by ROLF KNIERIM

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Old Testament Form Criticism Reconsidered

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The historical manifestations of typical forms, especially the interrelationship of the various typicalities in linguistic entities, and their influence on individual texts seem to be more flexible than form criticism has been prepared to assume.

AMONG the methods concerned with the exegesis of biblical texts, form criticism has had a prominent place since the beginning of our century.¹ Concentrating on the texts of the biblical literature as literary entities, form criticism has attempted to interpret these individual entities by discovering the matrices to which they owe their existence and which they reflect. And since a matrix is assumed to be typical in nature, individual texts emerging from it can be explained as specifications of a distinct typicality. The way form criticism has conceived of the typical is basically sociolinguistic and morphological: the linguistic types underlying the individual texts are genres that arise out of a typical societal or life setting. They are governed by patterns,

1. For a convenient discussion of the total method and its ramifications, cf. Klaus Koch, *The Growth of the Biblical Tradition, The Form Critical Method*, trans. by S. M. Cupitt (New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1969). Gene M. Tucker, *Form Criticism of the Old Testament* (Philadelphia, Fortress Press, 1971).

appear in typical formulaic expressions (*Formensprache*), convey a typical mood, and have a typical function.²

The explicit prerequisite in this conceptualization was, thereby, that the coherence of all these factors, at least that of the mood, the formulaic language, and the setting³ would have to be recognized in an attempt to identify a genre. Ascertaining that language was in ancient times much less individualized than it is in our days, that it was indeed patterned and governed by the structures of life itself which was basically societal, the form critics have operated on the basis of a hermeneutic of language according to which life and language correspond to one another: life creates language, and language reflects—societal, customary—life and its meaning. The philosophical premises of this position have been discussed elsewhere so that we need not recount them here.⁴ Neither can we afford to dwell even generally on the new avenues to biblical exegesis opened by the method, and the wealth of results it has yielded. Instead, we are preoccupied at this juncture with a number of fundamental problems that are built into the very system of the form-critical method. In focusing on this concern, we are aware of the rapidly increasing number of voices that are also concerned with it.

I

One of the facts is that we are no longer so clear as to what exactly a genre is. More pointedly: It is doubtful whether this has ever been clear. A historical and comparative survey of the criteria for understanding genres, or of the factors assumed to constitute a genre, shows a perplexing methodological flexibility and inconsistency.⁵

1. Gunkel's own theoretical conceptualization of a genre as a coherent entity of mood, form, and setting was at best an ideal. In his

2. Cf. the nucleus of the statement as quoted from Gunkel and discussed by Werner Klatt, *Herman Gunkel* (Göttingen, Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1969), pp. 106-25, 128, 143ff.

3. This was Gunkel's program. In the actual history of the discipline, however, the emphasis shifted more to the triad structure (form), setting, function; often also to theme, plot, or occupation of mind (*Geistesbeschäftigung*). Cf. Volkmar Wagner, *BZaW* 127 (1972), pp. 57, 59; Eerhard Gerstenberger, *WMANT* 20 (1965), p. 66.

4. Cf. beside Klatt, Hans Joachim Kraus, *Die Geschichte der historischkritischen Erforschung des Alten Testaments* (Neukirchen, Neukirchener Verlag, 2. Aufl., 1969).

5. Cf. especially William G. Doty, "The Concept of Genre in Literary Analysis" in *Proceedings*, ed. by Lane C. McGaughey (SBL, 1972), 2, pp. 413ff.; J. Arthur Baird, "Genre Analysis as a Method of Historical Criticism," *Ibid.*, pp. 385ff.; Wolfgang Richter, *Exegese als Literaturwissenschaft* (Göttingen, Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1971), pp. 125ff.

exegetical work, their balance had to bend considerably. Identification of a genre was governed by formal symptoms,⁶ by the setting,⁷ or even by content.⁸

2. This ambiguity has pervaded many of the attempts at classifying genres, and not only in the field of biblical scholarship. The attempts of the International Society for Folk Narrative Research at classifying folk narratives (*Sagen*) have so far met with insurmountable obstacles and eluded any consensus.⁹ One definition of *Sage* requires three constituents (one or more motifs, a fixed form, and—above all—a content of belief).¹⁰ But others are content with less. For some interpreters, the narratives are constituted by the setting in which they are narrated.¹¹ This is especially true for the historical narratives, which are classed by the locality¹² or by the everyday life setting with which they are concerned.¹³ For others, the aspect of the setting has to be complemented by another aspect such as types of motifs characteristic of different regions.¹⁴ For still others, setting becomes insignificant altogether. The puzzle of the so-called Migratory Legends is one of the reasons.¹⁵ The use of the criterion of morphology has had more positive results. In this approach narratives are grouped according to genetic families which have relatively stable compositional skeletons.¹⁶ But here, too, the basic criterion has had to be complemented with others, such as fixed thematic patterns¹⁷ or the overall theme (e.g., the Sodom and Gomorrah theme).¹⁸ Morphological classification has also been supplemented by the category of social function, as in the case of the *memorata* (*memorabilia*). These are grouped together because they serve to prove, explain, or illustrate, in addition to having a common form.¹⁹ One attempt to classify the total

6. Cf. Klatt, *Gunkel*, p. 143.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 229.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 217; Cf. Richter, *op. cit.*, pp. 75ff. If I see correctly, the old differentiation of generic types between oral forms and written genres has been generally discarded and justly so.

9. Cf. Leander Petzoldt, ed., *Vergleichende Sagenforschung* (Darmstadt, Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1969).

10. *Ibid.*, p. 309.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 352.

12. *Ibid.*, pp. 310, 421.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 328.

14. *Ibid.*, pp. 357, 359, 361, 364, 372.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 310.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 328.

17. *Ibid.*, pp. 326ff., 337.

18. *Ibid.*, pp. 315, 392, 395ff.

19. *Ibid.*, pp. 328, 342, 360.

spectrum of folk narrative used the three criteria of morphology, setting, and function intermittently.²⁰ And a projected, all-encompassing catalog differentiates between primordial (aetiological and eschatological) and historical narratives on the one hand, and narratives dealing with supernatural forces and supernatural persons on the other.²¹

3. What has been said about folk narratives is also true for the definition and classification of myths.²² Myth itself is inseparably related to its ritual setting.²³ It creates reality ritually. But it is striking that the variations of mythical language are not created by this setting itself. Rather they seem grounded in prerational structures of the mind.

The field of mythology helps to focus our problem. It shows that the order of interdependence between a setting and a genre can be reversible. Its linguistic form is by no means constituted by the setting. Rather one would have to say that the genre constitutes and forms the setting (i.e., the genre "myth" creates the ritual reality).

This also raises the questions of the nature of "genre" altogether. It can be conceived of as an external reproduction—in action and language—of the typical patterns in which the human mind perceives cosmic and social order. In other words, a genre such as myth can be understood as the expression of a "conceptual genre" of the mind.

This aspect cannot be taken lightly especially by those concerned with the form-critical interpretation of ancient texts. For it is well known that throughout most of the history of civilization, certainly at its early stages, the human institutions, and not only the cultic ones, were never thought of by their founders other than as earthly copies, images, and materializations of the primordial world. If, however, linguistic genres and institutional settings taken together can depend on preconceptualizations, we must revise one of the traditional form-critical assumptions. A genre is no longer to be constituted by its societal setting. A potential autonomy vis-à-vis setting can be attributed to generic language.

4. The centrality of this problem is indicated by its high visibility in different fields of research such as literature, folklore, myth and symbol, phenomenology of religion, linguistics and, most vocally, structuralism.

20. *Ibid.*, pp. 328f.

21. *Ibid.*, p. 368.

22. Cf. the interdisciplinary anthology, in Karl Kerényi, ed., *Die Eröffnung des Zugangs zum Mythos (Wege der Forschung XX)*, Darmstadt, Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1967).

23. *Ibid.*, pp. 170, 186, 262ff., 271ff.

The range of publications is so vast that a few examples from different areas must suffice at this point.

There has been a tendency in literary criticism to relate genre and cultural convention to genetically transmitted structures that lie below or behind empirical reality. The Chicago or neo-Aristotelian school, represented by R. S. Crane, has developed the concept of "intrinsic genre." It means that individual texts (poems) are immediately shaped by "the common symbolic operations of the human mind, and hence . . . the structures of meaning which, because they are basic and universal in man's experience, are in a sense given to poets rather than created by them."²⁴ This concept means that genres cannot be discovered except through individual texts intrinsically shaped by them. It also criticizes the traditional approach to poems on the basis of preconceived generic conceptualizations such as epic, tragedy, lyric. This has prevented interpreters from recognizing any of the actual structural principles in poems except for those already contained in their preferred definitions and models.²⁵ If I see correctly, the intrinsic genre of a text and the "structural principles" below it complement one another: The second expression refers to depth level, whereas the first one refers to the surface level on which it appears in individual texts.

5. The proximity of this position to that taken by the representatives of French structuralism is fairly obvious. Claude Levi-Strauss aims at discovering the fundamental patterns of the human mind that underlie its overwhelming diversity of expression.²⁶ He uncovers the unconscious structure underlying each institution and each custom, in order to obtain a principle of interpretation valid for other institutions and other customs.²⁷ When he does this, he appears in the company of those concerned with the discussion of genre. To be sure, the word genre scarcely occurs in the structuralist language, and understandably so. Structuralism wants to identify those structures that underlie all forms of human expression and behavior, and not primarily genres on the linguistic level.

24. R. S. Crane, *The Languages of Criticism and the Structure of Poetry* (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1953), p. 116.

25. *Ibid.*, p. 146.

26. E. Nelson Hayes and Tanya Hayes, eds., *Claude Levi-Strauss, The Anthropologist as Hero* (Cambridge and London, M.I.T. Press, 1970), p. 27.

27. *Ibid.*, p. 27; cf. also p. 41 and, e.g., Levi-Strauss, *Structural Anthropology* (Garden City, Anchor Books, Doubleday & Co., 1967), pp. 64, 81, 86; Günther Schiwy, *Der französische Strukturalismus* (Rowohlts deutsche enzyklopädie, 1971), p. 310.

Nevertheless, the structuralist method becomes interesting for the discussion of genre precisely at the point where it assumes that the variable patterns of linguistic expression and human behavior are received in already structured forms from the patterns and schemata conceived by the collective consciousness on its prelinguistic level.²⁸ This assumption opens perspectives for the explanation of the possible origins and identity traits of generic language, which go in principle beyond the framework of interpretation provided by traditional form criticism. If the typical forms which pervade individual and diverse expression actually come from underlying matrices which the human mind generates, then the structuralists' particular notion of "structure" may be able to offer additional criteria for the identification of genres. This may be useful since we have reason to assume that typical linguistic entities may arise from and reflect origins other than societal settings.²⁹

6. It is generally known that the structuralists have depended on F. de Saussure for their differentiation between the prelinguistic activity of the human mind (*langue*) and the activity of language (*parole*). Quite apart from the prominence which the methods of structural linguistics have recently received in biblical exegesis, there are two of its theories that may further exemplify the problem of genre concerning us here: one, the relationship between language and *langue*, the other the relationship between language and reality.

The first one builds on a fundamental distinction between the synchronic and the diachronic understanding of language (the horizontal language-field and the vertical language-history). This theory holds that certain structures of language persist throughout the years whereas others change. As a result both the persisting and the changing structures frequently affect and penetrate each other. This is—in the language of form criticism—the cause for the existence of "mixed genres."

The second and more important thesis holds that the synchronic structure of language is always related to a certain state of prelinguistic con-

28. Levi-Strauss, *Structural Anthropology*, pp. 55, 64; Hayes, *The Anthropologist . . .*, p. 203; cf. also Edmund Leach, editor, *The Structural Study of Myth and Totemism* (London, Tavistock Publications, 1967), pp. 17-21, 49, 120ff.

29. The potential of structuralism for form criticism becomes especially evident in view of its goal to encompass both the patterns of human language and of social behavior and to make them fruitful for cross-cultural comparisons.

conceptualization (*état de langue*).³⁰ This raises a question: Are not the genres of the synchronic level predominantly constituted by the structuring preoccupation of the human mind (*langue*) rather than by socio-historical settings? This second thesis suggests that such genres *can* coincide with the objective realities they refer to, but they *do not have to*.³¹ The implication of this thesis coincides with the statements of an increasing number of biblical scholars, saying that language, including generically patterned language, has its independent mode of existence. It is, so to say, a setting of its own kind which is not necessarily representative of a societal—or even any institutionalized—setting. This by no means implies, however, that a genre cannot be constituted by and reflect a certain setting. Nevertheless the conclusion seems unavoidable that “setting,” in the sense biblical form criticism has understood it, cannot be regarded indispensably as one of the factors that constitute genres. Not if genre is understood as a *linguistic* phenomenon.

7. Before we consider the possible consequences of these observations for the understanding of genre and for the form-critical methodology as a whole, we should look at some other different aspects of the conceptualization of genre.

For André Jolles,³² the one matrix that constitutes all the elementary genres (*einfache Formen*) and their artistic literary counterparts is the occupation of mind (*Geistesbeschäftigung*). This is different from the structuralists' notion of the operation of the subconscious “human mind.” “Occupation of mind” means much more. It is that on which man has, and sets, his mind. The different oral or literary genres receive their distinct identities from the different modes of that occupation of mind, its different concerns or orientations. If, for example, it is occupied with a distinctly confined reality of life such as work or family, the form of the genre will be congruous with that reality; it will grow out of it and reflect it. This is the *Sage*. And this genre grows out of its setting because the setting is precisely the focus of its preoccupation. However,

30. Horst Geckeler, *Strukturelle Semantik und Wortfeldtheorie* (München, Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1971), p. 185.

31. Cf. Geckeler, *Ibid.*, pp. 179ff.; cf. also Strauss, in Leach, *Structural Study of Myth*, p. 29. “The myth is certainly related to given (empirical) facts, but not as a *re-presentation* of them. The relationship is of a dialectic kind, and the institutions described in the myths can be the very opposite of real institutions.”

32. *Einfache Formen* (Darmstadt, Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, zweite unveränderte Auflage, 1958).

most of the other elementary genres such as fairy tale, *Memorable* legend, novel, and joke, do not grow out of, or represent such a setting. These are not morphologically differentiated by their settings, but rather by occupation with different concerns. It does not matter here whether Jolles was right in some of his interpretations or not. What matters is the fact that once more we are confronted with a position according to which generic formations of language and literature have their correlates in the typical operations of man's mind. Genres are the forms of expression through which these mental operations function. For Jolles, generic identity is constituted by the typical occupation of mind as it expresses itself in language. In view of Jolles' impact, especially on Old Testament form criticism, it is worthwhile to mention that his linguistically oriented understanding of genres is significantly different methodologically from Gunkel's sociologically oriented understanding.

8. Paul Böckmann adds yet another important nuance to the form-critical discussion of literature. He emphasizes the interrelation of language and the spirit of an age,³³ especially the interrelation of the language of generic forms (*Formensprache*) and the changing human self-understanding. He states that this interrelation subjects the genres to their historicity. With the change of human self-understanding, the language of generic forms cannot escape transformation either. In view of this fact, the question arises as to whether a normative concept of genre based on fixed autonomous sets of structural elements can be meaningfully upheld at all.³⁴ For a method oriented on such an understanding of genre will find it very difficult to understand the formative forces. In Böckmann's work, too, the category of setting plays little role. And instead of Jolles' "occupation of the mind," he emphasizes the context of the "spirit of the age," a position which is more socio-historically oriented. Most important, however, he points out another tension in the form-critical method: the conflict between changing formal structures in language and literature on the one hand and morphologically defined genres on the other. As a result of this conflict, Böckmann switches away from the traditional Greco-Roman and medieval

33. *Formensprache, Studien zur Literaturästhetik und Dichtungsinterpretation* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1969), p. 511.

34. Böckmann, *Formgeschichte der deutschen Dichtung* (Hamburg, Hoffman und Campe Verlag, 3. Aufl., 1967), pp. 38f.

methodology of *genre-criticism*, with its sophisticated system of generic classifications based upon morphology of language.³⁵ Instead he turns to a methodology of *form criticism* in what is for him the proper sense of the word. The structural unity of literary works is the focus of attention, in the context of their contemporary literary conventions, so that a holistic interpretation may be achieved. This does not mean that genres fall out of sight. But they become subservient to the holistic form-critical interpretation and they figure in it only as much as they play a role in the historical transformation of forms.

9. Finally, new perspectives in the interrelation of composition, pattern, formulaic language, setting, and theme have come from the folklorists. Based on field studies about "The Singer of Tales,"³⁶ Lord has attempted to outline a morphology of oral and written poetry. The oral text of a poem is a composition essentially governed by three factors: a pattern of formulaic language (in lines or cola), a system of rhetorical devices (rhythm, line, boundary, alliteration, chiasm, inclusio, assonance) by which line is added to line, and the grouping of a set of ideas around a major theme which accounts for the unity of the whole. Generally, all these factors are traditional, that is, they represent both the tools acquired by the poet from the tradition of oral poetry and the raw materials—the pattern of the content—which he has inherited, too. The formulas, the rhetorical framework, and the ideas of a theme are stable, but their organization in the actual composition of a poem is variable. Thus a poem itself exists as a thematic pattern outside of its actual performance, along with the devices of oral poetry. In its actual performance, and only there, it is composed into an oral text. This text never becomes normative. Only its pattern, the formulas and the rhetorical devices are normative. An oral composition is, therefore, neither learned by memory nor recited. It is created *ad hoc* by the poet. But the poet has learned his pattern and is in command of his poetic techniques. He can play his instrument. At this point the setting comes into the picture in a twofold way. Setting appears, on the one hand, as the tradition which furnishes the poet with his poetic devices and his thematic pattern. On the other hand, it appears as the situation of actual

35. Cf. the instructive book by Helmut Rahn, *Morphologie der Antiken Literatur* (Darmstadt, Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1969), esp. pp. 45-65.

36. Albert B. Lord, *The Singer of Tales* (New York, Atheneum 76, 1971).

performance. Supported by his instrument, he creates the oral text in the market place, the inn, or a family gathering in a house.³⁷

The oral texts of a poem created by the singer in his performances are not identical. Nevertheless, they are of the same kind because they follow the same dictate under which oral poems are composed. As soon as a poem is created for the purpose of writing, however, the resulting text is different in kind from all the oral texts. Not only is there from that point on a fixed text—an “original”—the writing itself stands under a dictate of composition and orientation towards readers, which changes the nature of the text, and it takes on the traits of the unique.³⁸

The relevance of such a study for the form-critical methodology is obvious. Most importantly, we possess evidence here for the indissoluble coherence of an oral genre with its content, its form, and its setting. Its conceptual pattern belongs to the setting of the guild which represents the tradition. The textual materialization not only belongs to the setting, it literally owes its existence to the setting of its performance. As a literary genre, however, it is removed from those settings and subjected to the different conditions entailed in the situation of its writing. Beyond that, this case reveals something of the relationship between the generic pattern and the individual contribution and something of the relationship between oral and written tradition. But Lord is only concerned with the question of oral poetry and only with the genre and setting of poetic tales at that. How much can it contribute to the problem of oral prose? Can it help to rediscover the particulars of its oral style and composition, and above all its traditional conceptual pattern? The only things we possess are the written texts and we are told that the written text is different in kind both from an oral text and its pattern. To what degree are the criteria for the description of the poetic tale and its setting applicable to the analysis of different genres and their different settings—even other poetic ones? Does this method lend itself to a kind of form criticism capable of identifying the thematic traditions, the formulaic language, and the linguistic composition of texts much more than their genres? These questions may show that Lord's

37. Cf. the similar observations on the oral prose style of the nordic sagas and the setting of their performances by the saga-tellers before the Icelandic and Greenlandic assemblies, the royal courts or on special festivals: Gustav Neckel, *Die altnordische Literatur* (Darmstadt, Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, reprint of first edition, 1923), esp. pp. 104ff.

38. Lord, *op. cit.*, pp. 124ff.

method deals only with a segment of the materials with which biblical form criticism is confronted. Therefore, while availing ourselves of it for this segment, we must keep in mind the other approaches for dealing with the generic variety of Old Testament literature.

10. The review of some fields concerned in one way or another with the problems of morphology, setting, genre, function, and typicality of language and its occupations shows a startling diversity indeed. It would be worthwhile to analyze the reasons for this diversity, but we will refrain from such analysis and, instead, cling only to one observation which brings us back to the point that gave rise to our review. Not only is the concept of genre developed quite differently in various approaches, even when approaches use the same combination of categories, but the categories may be weighted quite differently.

Rather than turning away from the confusion of these methodologies or demanding that they be coordinated under a uniting theory (which would amount to nothing but a useless, monolithic abstraction), we should ask whether or not similar observations can be made with regard to Old Testament form-critical scholarship. What could such an overall situation mean for a reconceptualization of the form-critical method itself? The vast amount of publications compels us to be selective and to concentrate on exemplary cases that exemplify the situation.

11. Use of the morphology of language and literature as a heuristic principle for the identification of genres has become one of the most visible trademarks of Old Testament form-critical scholarship. It has recently been advocated in a most programmatic way by Richter.³⁹ He relates form to the individual text and genre to a text-type. A genre is a structural model or scheme (*Strukturmuster*) of approximate value,⁴⁰ and the occurrence of at least two congruous or similar units is the foundation for its identification.⁴¹ Richter demands that literary units be identified strictly on morphological grounds. However, he emphasizes that both the forms and the genres point to the settings where they originate or to the relations in life which constitute them.⁴² The forms or genres and their setting are related to one another in such a way that

39. *Exegese als Literaturwissenschaft*, pp. 72-152.

40. *Ibid.*, p. 132.

41. *Ibid.*, p. 138f.

42. *Ibid.*, pp. 121, 133, 145ff.

genres can change their setting. The categories of content or concern must be separated from the criteria by which genres can be identified.

By correlating genre and setting, Richter is essentially in line with the traditional form-critical method even though he refines it skillfully. The question concerning us here, however, is precisely this programmatic assumption that genres are constituted by their setting. In other words, the setting is assumed to provide or produce the matrix to which typical linguistic units owe their existence. To be sure, this assumption can be ascertained with regard to a great many forms, formulas, and genres in the Old Testament. Thus the problem is not whether generic language *can* depend on setting but whether this has to be assumed always. Can the assumption become an exclusive methodological principle under which all Old Testament texts have to be understood according to Richter's own statement?⁴³ Genre is an operational term, that is, a term which implies something about the function of a genre, namely to point to—its setting. If, however, setting means basically the matrix which produces the structural models, we can ask whether this matrix could not be something other than a setting in the traditional form-critical sense in Richter's sense. It could, for example, be the basic structure of an existential human situation, or Jolles' occupation of the human mind. At this point, we are reminded of what has been said above about the understanding of the operation of mind in structuralism, structural linguistics, and by Jolles. We are confronted with the possibility of language itself as an autonomous matrix of typical linguistic expressions. This is a possibility for the Old Testament traditions as well.

Some form-critical research seems actually to follow this assumption. Claus Westermann's studies in Genesis may be a case in point. By analyzing the models according to which the core of the original patriarchal narratives is structured he finds them reflecting the reality and the typical situations of families with their problems. They are family narratives.⁴⁴ Their matrix is the setting of such family situations in such a cultural milieu. The narratives in Genesis 1—11, however, are of a different kind. They are concerned with the world, the evolution of mankind, and with the nature of man, his guilt and destiny. They are

43. *Ibid.*, p. 133.

44. "Arten der Erzählung in der Genesis," in *Forschung am Alten Testament, Gesammelte Studien* (München, Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1964), pp. 1-91.

primordial narratives.⁴⁵ Their matrix is the occupation of man's mind with these realities, as is evident in the worldwide dissemination of their motifs. For Westermann, both genres and their structural models apparently are products of the occupation of the human mind. The only reason why the matrix of the family narratives can be seen in their setting is the narrator's preoccupation with that kind of reality.

Paul D. Hanson, in an important article on "Zechariah 9 and the Recapitulation of an Ancient Ritual Pattern,"⁴⁶ seems to follow a method with similar implications. Taking his text as a whole, he discovers in it all the structural components of an ancient Near Eastern genre which he calls the "conflict myth" (p. 53). Its form and substance have had an enormous influence on considerable portions of the Old Testament, especially the "Divine warrior hymns" of the sixth and fifth century corpora. This genre is basically described by Hanson as a dominating "thought form," a motif "dominated by the mythopoeic view of divine action" but expressed in a vast diversity of form, style, and content. This diversity requires a basic stock of typical components necessary for the genre to be transformed into a text. It does not expect the genre to be cast once and for all into a fixed form. With this assumption, Hanson approaches Lord's conceptual model which is similarly flexible.

Taken together, the work of Hanson, Westermann, and Richter raises some questions. There are well-known studies which establish genres on the basis of a fixed linguistic pattern, such as Beyerlin's and Baltzer's covenant formulary⁴⁷ and Jeremias' theophany.⁴⁸ Westermann and Hanson have provided studies which establish genres on the basis of a concern or motif which can take diverse forms in specific texts. Does not Richter's definition of genre as a structural model or scheme of approximate value fail to allow for both of these methods? If both fixed and variable text-types in fact exist in our literature, methodological openness is demanded. We should not have to choose between two

45. Westermann, "Genesis 1-11," in *Erträge der Forschung*, Band 7 (Darmstadt, Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1972), esp. pp. 107f.

46. *JBL*, 92:37-59 (1973).

47. Walter Beyerlin, *Origins and History of the Sinai Tradition*, trans. by S. Rudman (Oxford, B. H. Blackwell, 1965). Klaus Baltzer, *The Covenant Formulary in Old Testament, Jewish, and Early Christian Writings*, trans. by David E. Green, (Philadelphia, Fortress Press, 1971. From 2nd edition, 1964).

48. Jörg Jeremias, *Theophanie*, WMANT 10 (Neukirchen, Neukirchener Verlag, 1965), criticized by Hanson for this position.

alternative methodological premises, namely between concepts of genre as a fixed or flexible structure. Insistence on one or the other becomes methodologically meaningless. Instead we should ask whether a certain text rests on the one or the other sort of generic pattern, whether this or that exegesis does more justice to it.⁴⁹

Coming back to Hanson's description of the genre of conflict myth, we find another instance in which the assumption of a setting in life being the matrix of the genre plays virtually no role at all. Perhaps Hanson would like to affirm that it originated in an ancient Near Eastern cult festival. Even so, one could ask if the mythical conceptualization did not constitute the cult festival and its pattern rather than being constituted by it. Everything Hanson says indicates that the occurrence of this genre in Israel does not point to a setting from which it emerged, which it reflected, or to which it owed its existence. Does this not put Richter's assumption about the coherence between genre and setting in question? Hanson's example also points up the false dilemma in which a great number of form critical studies are caught. After a genre has been identified with great effort on morphological grounds, those studies continue to look for a setting at any cost, postulating, creating, fabricating one even if—sometimes admittedly—there is no evidence for it; and all that simply because the methodology demands a setting without which a genre would be unthinkable! Our observations, however, indicate that the reason for the stubborn absence of settings may sometimes lie deeper than in the absence of internal or external evidence for them, or of the interpreter's genius to track them down: It may lie in the very nature of language itself.

If I see correctly, Richter himself has taken a position different from the one referred to above in an article⁵⁰ in which he reviews G. von Rad's thesis on the nature and origin of the Hexateuch.⁵¹

12. The need for a critical reevaluation of the form-critical dogma of the coherence of genre and setting has been advocated also by New

49. In view of this distinction, the frequent insistence either on fixed or on flexible patterns or formulaic language for the identification of a genre and their respective criticisms becomes methodologically meaningless.

50. "Beobachtungen zur theologischen Systembildung in der alttestamentlichen Literatur anhand des kleinen geschichtlichen Credo," in *Wahrheit und Verkündigung, Festschrift Michale Schmaus* (München-Paderborn-Wien, Verlag Ferdinand Schöningh, 1967), I, 175-211.

51. *The Problems of the Hexateuch and Other Essays*, trans. by E. W. T. Dicken (Edinburgh, London, Olive & Boyd, 1966).

Testament scholars in recent years. Via has stated that the cardinal mistake of form criticism was its failure to grant in the interpretation of texts priority to their semantic character and unity.⁵² Instead, it has preferred the extra-textual factor of the setting in life. And with explicit reference to the autonomy of the linguistic art-work, he moves away from the primary and almost exclusive function of the "setting in life" category saying that the language form is a category of its own. Güttgemanns also makes a fundamental criticism of the form-critical method.⁵³ and asks for a new theory of literature of the biblical genres which is based on the discipline of linguistics.⁵⁴

In summing up, the problem of the interrelation of genre and setting has not been critically examined enough in Old Testament form criticism to date. It seems as if the coherence of the two can no longer be dogmatically upheld in the sense form criticism has done. Hence, the method must be designed in a way as to allow us to do justice to the nature of all texts. In such a design, the relationship between genre and setting must remain an open one, so that both can be related to, or kept independent of, one another as a text may require.

II

There is another major problem in the form-critical method. It concerns the understanding of the relationship between a genre's structure on the one hand and its content, mood, function, intention, or concern on the other.

The typical structure or pattern on which individual texts are based has been the key to the *recognition* of genres in virtually all the form-critical studies. It rested on the insight that men express themselves through language by availing themselves of the typical patterns of expression conventional in their societies. The accuracy of this assumption could be demonstrated for a wide range of literatures: ancient Near Eastern and biblical, Greco-Roman, Medieval, and others as well. This has given the method a broad undergirding. As for the Old Testament,

52. Dan Otto Via, Jr., *The Parables. Their Literary and Existential Dimensions* (Philadelphia, Fortress Press, 1967).

53. Erhard Güttgemanns, *Offene Fragen zur Formgeschichte des Evangeliums* (Beiträge zur Ev. Theologie 54, München, Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1970), esp. pp. 44ff.

54. Güttgemanns, *studia linguistica neotestamentica*, (Beiträge zur Ev. Theologie 60, München, Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1971), pp. 79, 145, a.o.

none of its parts has remained unaffected by this approach, be it the narratives, the laws, the prophetic or wisdom literature, or the Psalms.⁵⁵

1. Gerhard von Rad has once more stressed the importance of poetic form for the communication of that which is on man's mind:

(The peculiarity of poetry) cannot be separated from the intellectual process as if it were something added later; rather, perception takes place precisely in and with the poetic conception. One certainly cannot regard the phenomenon of the poetic expression as a transfiguration and a transformation, stemming from within a man, of experiences which, from the aesthetic point of view, are much less impressive, that is as a matter more of appearance than of reality.⁵⁶ (In didactic poetry,) The possibility, indeed the necessity, of clothing one perception in one form and another in another, arose from the material itself as well as from the situation of the instructors. But one will not be able, in every case, to succeed in proving that specific perceptions could be expressed only in specific forms and not also in others. On the other hand, the chosen form was a neutral garb only in a very few cases, so it is necessary to say something about particularly characteristic forms.⁵⁷

And, just as many genres of psalms, laws, or prophetic speeches have their characteristic patterns, so do the many genres of wisdom literature. The "school question," the "teacher's opening summons,"⁵⁸ the "proverb of comparison,"⁵⁹ the "maxim,"⁶⁰ the "numerical sayings,"⁶¹ the "dialogue,"⁶² the "plain statement" and "exhortatory sentence,"⁶³ and the "riddle."⁶⁴ These are all governed by certain structures without which they could not be what they are. Of course, this force of the form is especially predominant in those linguistic entities that are short.

55. Hermann Gunkel and Joachim Begrich, *Einleitung in die Psalmen*, HAT, (Ergänzungsband, Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1933) is certainly the most comprehensive treatment of a whole section of the Old Testament ever undertaken along this line.

56. Gerhard von Rad, *Wisdom in Israel* (Nashville, Abingdon Press, 1972; Ger., *Weisheit in Israel*, Neukirchen, Neukirchener Verlag, 1970), p. 24.

57. *Ibid.*, pp. 34f.

58. *Ibid.*, p. 18. Original German: "Schulfrage", "Lehreröffnungsruf."

59. *Ibid.*, p. 29. Original German: "Vergleichsspruch."

60. *Ibid.*, p. 26. Original German: "Sinnspruch."

61. *Ibid.*, p. 35. Original German: "Zahlenspruch." Cf. W. M. Roth, *Numerical Sayings in the Old Testament*, SVT XVIII, (Leiden, E. J. Brill, 1964).

62. Von Rad, *Wisdom*, pp. 40f. Original German: "Dialog."

63. *Ibid.*, p. 31. Original German: "Aussagesatz," "Mahnsatz." Cf. Hans-Jürgen Hermisson, *Studien zur israelitischen Spruchweisheit*, WMANT 28 (Neukirchen, Neukirchener Verlag, 1968).

64. Von Rad, *Wisdom*, pp. 36f. Original German: "Rätselspiel."

As these examples show, there can be no doubt that in many cases the typical form either constitutes a genre, or else it is one of the constitutive factors. But a problem arises when genre is defined strictly on such morphological grounds, to the exclusion of "content" as one of its inherent elements.⁶⁵ This problem would be less complicated if one could show that in many cases definitions of genres on the basis of content were simply acts of methodological oversight and neglect.⁶⁶ However, there is a broad chorus of voices stating explicitly either that form, content, and setting,⁶⁷ or that form and content together are the factors that constitute a genre.⁶⁸ We are, therefore, not confronted with inadvertent mistakes, but with an explicit polarization. And it may well be that the reasons for the dissension lie deeper than has been shown.

As an approach to the problem we can ask whether the typical form, structural model, or scheme can be taken as the *sole* factor by which genres are constituted. A positive argument would have to show not only that the formal factors in language suffice for the recognition of genres in some cases. It would also have to show that formal factors are the only ones that constitute genres.

2. In view of such a proposition, we would, first of all, have to ask whether a structural model is by definition, that is, always, a genre. Granted that a structural model, a supraindividual textform, be it fixed or flexible, can stand for a genre.

The assumption that structure is all there is to genre is difficult to maintain.⁶⁹ For example, Richter's own definition of part of the J narrative in Exodus 3 as "religious 'statement-narrative'" (*religiöse 'Aus-*

65. Richter, *Exegese als Literaturwissenschaft*, pp. 125ff.

66. This is the main thrust of Richter's criticism, *op. cit.*, pp. 125ff.

67. See above, Footnote 3.

68. Cf., e.g., Doty, "Genre in Literary Analysis," p. 434, who cites Tucker's review (Dialog, 5 [1966], p. 145) of Koch's *Was ist Formgeschichte?*; Hermisson, *op. cit.*, p. 85; Von Rad, *Wisdom*, p. 30.

69. The understanding of "structural model" in the sense the word could have in French structuralism can remain aside at this point. Richter's own proposal that at least two similarly structured units would have to be found within different parts of the Old Testament in order that we may see whether or not there is a genre (*Exegese*, p. 138), does not suffice. One would have to show that these two units, or even more, carry and govern a text unit in a typical way either as expressions of a distinct setting, or of a typical occupation of mind, or as models of communication. In order to show this, one would not only need some similar units, but evidence that they convey something typical.

sage-Erzählung)⁷⁰ points to the difficulty. The structural term "narrative" is deficient by itself. It allows for no distinction between narratives which are clearly of different types in spite of identical or similar stylistic patterns. The word "religious" refers to content; it obviously has nothing to do with the "structural model."

Westermann's differentiations between "reporting" and "describing" praise⁷¹ are based to a degree on grammatical distinctions, and the distinctions between "imperative" and "participial" hymns⁷² are certainly based on grammatical models. But these models may not be the factors that constitute hymnic genres.⁷³

As for the wisdom sayings, the meter and parallelismus membrorum are a constitutive structural model. But it is impossible to say that this structural model constitutes the genre. This would neither allow for a further differentiation among these sayings nor would it account for the fact that the same model was used in other forms of poetry too.⁷⁴

The same is true for the studies in legal and related genres. Certain grammatical forms such as imperative, jussive, prohibitive, vetitive, or certain syntactical constructions in casuistic laws, death-declarations, or curse formulations are undoubtedly part of the formulaic language of genres. But the problem remains whether these forms as such constitute the genres, and whether the genres avail themselves of only these forms.⁷⁵

70. Richter, *Die sogenannten vorprophetischen Berufsberichte*, FRLANT 101 (Göttingen, Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1970), p. 80. Cf. the same generic definitions for the quite different scheme of Exodus 19 by Erich Zenger, *Die Sinaitheophanie*, (*Forschung zur Bibel* 3 (Würzburg, Echter Verlag, 1971), esp. p. 129.

71. *The Praise of God in the Psalms*, trans. by Keith R. Crim (Richmond, Va., John Knox Press, 1965).

72. Frank Crüsemann, *Studien zur Formgeschichte von Hymnus und Danklied in Israel*, WMANT 32, (Neukirchen, Neukirchener Verlag, 1969), pp. 19ff., 81ff.

73. Gunkel-Begriff, *Einleitung in die Psalmen* (1933), already suffered from the tension between the identification of patterns and the definition of the genres of Psalms on different grounds.

74. Cf. Hermisson's critique of this problem, (*israelitischen Spruchweisheit*, pp. 84ff., 137ff., 179ff., 187ff.) and his insistence on the variability of syntactical forms within the same genre (p. 189).

75. Hermann Schulz identified a genuine genre, the "law of death" (*Todesrecht*) which is concerned with the violation of prohibitions involving capital offenses, basically on the grounds of a consistent pattern, (*Das Todesrecht im Alten Testament*, BZAW 114 [1969]), pp. 5-84. Gerhard Liedke, however, has recognized with good reason the stylistic variability of both the casuistic and the apodictic laws and sought the criteria for that which constitutes the genres in the nature of different judicial authorities of which one proposes settlements (casuistic) whereas the other, the king, establishes death declarations (apodictic), (*Gestalt und Bezeichnung alttestamentlicher Rechtssätze*, WMANT 39 [Neukirchener Verlag, 1971], pp. 11-153). The most radical criticism of a formalistic conceptualization was leveled by Volkmar Wagner who abolishes the category "apodictic law" altogether while saying that laws (*Rechtssätze*),

What has been said of the smaller units is all the more true for the larger ones. Structural models cannot be assumed to be constitutive of genres by definition. Westermann's scheme of judgment in the narratives of Genesis 3—11,⁷⁶ or Richter's call-report scheme, or Long's combination of the call scheme with a vision-report scheme,⁷⁷ or Von Rad's scheme of the call followed by the public proof of the charisma,⁷⁸ or his "long didactic poem" (*grosse Lehrdichtung*),⁷⁹ or "didactic narrative" (*Lehrerzählung*),⁸⁰ and many others. This does not mean, however, that the texts in which these schemes are embedded could not belong to certain generic types other than indicated by those schemes. Therefore, the conclusion seems inevitable: Structural models can but do not have to be genres, and a tension between them is entirely possible.

regardless of their variable forms, are constituted by the *logical* coherence between a case and its legal consequences in statements concerned with legal issues. (*Rechtssätze in gebundener Sprache und Rechtssatzungen im israelitischen Recht*, BZAW 127 [Berlin-New York, de Gruyter, 1972]). As for the prohibitions, Gerstenberger has warned of undue formalism and emphasized the variability of forms of the genre (called by him "prohibitives"), (*Wesen und Herkunft des "apodiktischen Rechts"*, WMANT 20 [Neukirchen, Neukirchener Verlag, 1965], esp. pp. 42ff., 50ff.). Wolfgang Richter, however, has identified a genre *Mahnspruch* (exhortation) strictly on the basis of the grammatical form of vetitive and a motivation which was used by teachers training youngsters of the upper classes for public service as a technique to intensify their teaching of the prohibitions, (*Recht und Ethos* [München, Kösel Verlag, 1966], esp. pp. 41-68, 172ff.). A genre of exhortation expressing itself in just one grammatical form, and that in a school! In a recent article, Weinfeld has taken quite a different position. Asking for the origin of the apodictic style, he finds it in a dialogue pattern of legal instruction imposed by a king upon his subjects who in turn pledge the acceptance and fulfillment of the commandments. (M. Weinfeld, "The origin of the apodictic law," *Vet. Test.* XXIII [1973], pp. 63ff.). While I can not believe that Weinfeld is correct in assuming this pattern to be the only origin of the apodictic style, I do believe that he has reintroduced an essential truth into the discussion, namely, that the forms under discussion can also belong to genres other than those for which Gerstenberger, Richter and others have reserved them. They can, in fact, belong to "legal ordinances . . . proclaimed in the form of authoritative apodictic commands" (Weinfeld, p. 75). This case shows, again, that typical forms do not by definition indicate certain genres. Their different generic character may very well depend on other circumstances such as, e.g., distinctly different settings in which they were used, and/or different functions they had in a communication. What has been said may also caution against the common assumption that laws are constituted by both a statement of the case (protasis) and a statement of the legal consequences (apodosis), whereas prohibitions stipulating no consequences cannot be considered as laws.

76. Claus Westermann, *Forschung am Alten Testament, Theologische Bücherei* 24, (München, Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1964), esp. pp. 47ff.

77. Burke O. Long, "Prophetic Call Traditions and Reports of Visions," ZAW 84 (1972), pp. 494ff.

78. Gerhard von Rad, *Old Testament Theology*, trans. by D. M. G. Stalker (New York, Harper & Row, 1962), I, pp. 326ff., 329; Rolf Knierim, "The Messianic Concept in the First Book of Samuel," F. Thomas Trotter, ed., *Jesus and the Historian*, (Philadelphia, The Westminster Press, 1968), p. 26.

79. Von Rad, *Wisdom*, pp. 38f.

80. *Ibid.*, pp. 46f.

3. Conversely, a genre is not always constituted by one and the same structure. For example, H. W. Wolff has defined the genre of Hosea 3 as "Memorable." Following Jolles, he sees this genre as a basic form in which a report and its interpretation are united.⁸¹ The argument looks morphological. But this same basic form can be found in much of our literature other than in call-narratives or self-reports. To use the term "Memorable" may well explain Hosea 3 on the basis of the concern or intention, regardless of the forms through which such concerns are expressed. But it contributes little toward ascertaining the basic *structure* of a call narrative, a prophetic *Selbstbericht*, or of "Memorables." In dealing with wisdom sayings, Hermisson has stressed that didactic purpose, a specific mode of thinking, or even the constitutive motifs can all play an important role in forming an expression.⁸² And Long found it necessary in his study on etiology to propose that we "devise a methodology which will yield results in those cases of alleged etiological tradition where no clear formula or inferential structure is apparent. Briefly, the question is: are there distinctive signs in *this* material which show it to function etiologically? . . . A wider knowledge of the various marks which reveal a story's function is needed. . . ." ⁸³ The number of examples can easily be augmented.⁸⁴ One could dispense with the implications of these references if the current discussion in related fields such as, for example, literature and linguistics, would encourage us to do so. But this is not the case. In fact, there are strong tendencies to adhere to the unity or identity of structure and content in language—both on the level of *langue* and of *parole* as well as to emphasize the dependence of structure on meaning and intention.

4. The particular problem confronting us here is that in the form-critical interpretation of Old Testament texts we often cannot expect a typical scheme to be congruent with a typical function, intention, or

81. H. W. Wolff, *Hosea* BK XIV (Neukirchen, Neukirchener Verlag), pp. 70ff.

82. *Op. cit.*, pp. 28f., 79, 84f., 88, 93, 137ff., 189.

83. Burke O. Long, *The Problem of Etiological Narrative in the Old Testament*, BZAW 108 [Berlin, Alfred Töpelmann, 1968], p. 94.

84. The problem could already be demonstrated from Gunkel's various publications on the Psalms. His definitions of the genres of the Psalms in part rest ambivalently on one or two of his three major principles rather than on all of them. This ambivalence was a major reason for Mowinckel to identify the genres of the Psalms on the principle of setting, and not of structure or thought/mood, in *The Psalms in Israel's Worship* (Nashville, Abingdon Press, 1962), esp. pp. 81-83.

concern. We can observe not only that typical structures are used for varying intentions but also that typical intentions or concerns are expressed through varying structures. Therefore, if we propose that the morphological aspect be the basis for the discovery of genres, we must be aware that often this reveals nothing more than the typicality of structure. It does not necessarily reveal much about the typicality of purpose, intent, or content. Nor does it determine which of these factors dominates a text-type or a text. In other words, genre would only be a particular category within a number of typicalities of a text.

If genre is conceived in this way, we have not touched on how it relates to sociohistorical conditions. In the historical process of a society there is an inherent dialectic between communication of the typical and communication of the changing expectations of society. If types of communication are subject to the dynamics of this process, the force of the dialectic away from conventional expectations may be more of a factor in communication than fixed, conventional schemes.⁸⁵ The category of the so-called "mixed genres" (*Mischgattungen*) is a case in point. Their definition as mixed genres implies that they must be understood as deteriorations of "pure" genres.⁸⁶ However, it is likely that they reflect their sociohistorical conditions more typically than any pure genre could. It could be that their identity is constituted by their sociohistorical context, and not by their lack of conventional pattern. They may exist, therefore, in their own right.

For the sake of clarification, a distinction should be made between the preliminary heuristic process of recognizing a genre and the final determination of what constitutes the genre of a specific text. Preconceived models are indispensable to begin with. Recognizing traces of a schematic model may not reveal what really constitutes it, especially if the constituting factor is a typical setting or occupation of mind which

85. Hans Robert Jauss, *Literaturgeschichte als Provokation* (Frankfurt a.M., Suhrkamp Verlag, 2. Aufl. 1970), pp. 144ff.

86. Martin Kessler raises the question of the understanding of "genre-elements" in the context of mixed genres ("From Drought to Exile," [S.B.L. 1972 *Proceedings*, Vol. 2, 1972], p. 515). The problem is difficult. One would probably have to say that while a "mixed genre" certainly consists of parts or elements of several heterogeneous genres, the presence of genre-elements in a text does not yet automatically indicate a mixed genre. Mixed genre would have to be understood as a typicality of its own governing the composition of genre-elements and giving the whole a typical identity. Genre-elements on the other hand, can be adduced by text-types without making mixed genres out of them.

could manifest itself in various forms of linguistic expression.⁸⁷

5. Our considerations so far support suspicions. Not only does the methodological inconsistency of scholars account for the variety in criteria for identifying genres, but so also does the nature of the discipline traditionally called *Formgeschichte*, or form criticism.

To the extent that genre is by definition a "conventional structure" and a conventional structure a "form," form criticism is by definition genre criticism. However, we have seen that the discipline has had to broaden this structural notion of genre to include other factors. In its attempt to interpret specific linguistic phenomena in terms of the actual typicality which governs them, form criticism has had to resort to the categories of setting, function, intention, and occupation of mind.

There is a clear disadvantage to the identification of genre on strictly morphological grounds. It eliminates the possibility that a text may be governed by some other typicality. We have seen that there are texts governed by other typicalities. If form criticism dogmatically holds to strictly morphological criteria, it can no longer claim genre as the central category by which texts and text-types are governed and understood.

If we expand genre to include a diversity of possible typicalities by which texts can be constituted, it would be a departure from the mainstream of the form-critical tradition. We could no longer expect to determine a genre on the basis of a morphological investigation of language alone. But at the same time, we would be forced to concentrate on whatever typicality governs a text, regardless of which one it might be. This task must remain the overriding concern of form criticism whether we ultimately agree on a concept of genre or not. In view of this situation, it may be advisable to revise the form-critical method in such a way that its major traditional categories can function as heuristic tools that enable us to discover the typicality or the typicalities governing a text. Then the question can be left to eventual findings. Do these categories coincide, or are they related, in a given text? And if they are related, what is the hierarchy of their interrelationship?

Before we try to present a short outline of such a methodological design, two remarks are necessary. The first one is concerned with the

87. Cf. Güttgemann's discussion of the modality of literary genres (*Offene Fragen*, pp. 180ff.).

relationship between oral and written texts. One of the important tenets of the form-critical method has been that the written literature is dependent on its oral tradition. This was based on the theory that the biblical literature has the life of the people as its formative matrix. One of the consequences of this assumption has been that the genres of texts were widely identified on the basis of a supposed oral language. It seemed self-evident that recognition of the oral background of a written text led automatically to understanding the literary typicality. Whatever could not be explained along that line could be assigned to the redactor and dealt with under redaction criticism.⁸⁸ We can no longer be so sure of those methodological assumptions. Not every literary typicality can be explained from an oral background. Where this is, nevertheless, the case, we have in principle to account for the probability, at least for the possibility, that written language has its own modality.⁸⁹ We have to account for the potential difference between written texts and their oral bases, a difference that may be fundamental compared with the variations oral texts of the same type have among themselves.⁹⁰ The question is no longer to what extent our texts rest on oral traditions or language, or whether oral language is more reliable than written. We must reckon with a potential qualitative difference between oral and written language. Form-critical methodology must take the literary character of our texts seriously. The literary versions

88. This statement has not overlooked Gunkel's basic skepticism regarding the historical reliability of oral transmission which is discussed in the excellent dissertation by D. A. Knight, *Rediscovering the Traditions of Israel* (Theol. Faculty, Göttingen University, 1972 [to be published as Nr. 11 in the dissertation series of S.B.L.], p. 82.) In the passage referred to by Knight, Gunkel discusses the reliability of the transmission of oral traditions for our historical knowledge. But Knight, influenced by the perspectives of the traditio-historical literature, the history of which he wrote, did not distinguish between oral language underlying written language as its background and between oral traditions put finally into writing after a long process of growth. The extensive amount of literature as discussed by Knight shows clearly that the sociological and traditio-historical aspects in oral language (or: the form- and traditio-historical questions) were constantly mixed up and that their distinction played scarcely any role for the interpretation of written texts. Knight's conclusion that Gunkel's "realization anticipates Lord by 50 years" (p. 82) is, therefore, not correct because Lord, unlike Gunkel, did not discuss the problem of the historical reliability of oral traditions. He was interested in the relationship between texts at the stage of their oral performance and their written edition.

89. Cf. Güttgemanns' discussion in *Offene Fragen*, pp. 44ff., 82ff., 119ff., 154ff., and, e.g. Noam Chomsky, *Language and Mind* (New York, Harcourt, Brace & World, 1968) pp. 100ff.

90. In view of these problems, Güttgemanns has—correctly—called for "a new theory of literature of the biblical genres in discussion with linguistics" (*studia linguistica neotestamentica*, p. 145).

are the only ones we possess. If these texts, or some of them, rest on oral traditions, then this fact must be specifically demonstrated. Furthermore, the relationship or distinctly different typicalities between written and oral versions must be explained.

Our second remark is concerned with the emphasis by form criticism on the typical, and with the individuality of texts. For not only do we possess our texts in written form, we also possess the typicalities only in individual manifestations. It has been correctly emphasized that the interpretation of text must pay attention to both their typicality and their individuality, and that both tasks stand in their own right.⁹¹ Each contributing in its own way to total interpretation. This means that through the exegesis of text-units, the identification of the text-*types* must be established in contradistinction to the individuality of the texts.

III

Our analysis of some of the major problem-areas of form criticism shows that the method has not been employed uniformly. Major problems implied in the method from the inception have not been sufficiently recognized. The components which comprise a text's typicality (structure/scheme/genre — setting — content/mood/function/intention) are not always unified in the same way. The interrelationship of these components is not statically fixed. They influence texts in various ways. Nevertheless, the quest for the typicalities by which the individual texts are constituted, governed, or informed remains a decisive methodological factor for their interpretation. But the actual extent to which text-types exert influence must be realistically presented in such interpretation! It is entirely possible to identify a text-type behind an individual text, for example, on the basis of some of the elements. But if this is only a partial influence on the text, one could completely misunderstand the meaning of the text as a whole. The identification of text-types behind texts is, therefore, essentially dependent on the preceding identification of texts as entities, so that both support and confirm one another. The typical

91. Cf. James Muilenburg, "Form Criticism and Beyond," *JBL* 88:1ff (1969). The problem with Muilenburg's meritorious paper is that it does not show where the "rhetorical criticism" proposed by him goes "beyond" form criticism. The way he summarizes "rhetorical criticism" on p. 18 could also be part of an article on the form-critical method. This unclarity has been overcome in Roy F. Melugin, "The Typical Versus the Unique Among the Hebrew Prophets," (*S.B.L. Proceedings*, 1972, Vol. 2), pp. 331ff.

behind the text and the typical *in* the text must coincide.

In view of the methodological diversity, *it seems appropriate to conceptualize the methodology less ideologically than in the past. It would, therefore, seem proper to set up a framework within which the specific form-critical tools can be applied flexibly.* Through such a flexible usage of the tools, we could then recognize both the distinct typicalities which govern the texts and their particular interrelationships. We would also see the various ways in which the typical in the texts is related with the unique. The following outline is an attempt toward such a methodology. It will concentrate on "structure" because structural interpretation has been less developed in form criticism than have genre and setting, and because it is here that the focus of the present discussion lies.

1. Text and Structure. In the last generation we have witnessed an explosion of studies and discussions about structure. Structure has become a focus of scholarly attention in many fields.⁹² In spite of its programmatic commitment to form-analysis and valuable contributions, Old Testament form criticism has not yet given the method of structural interpretation the attention which it deserves as a distinctive research tool in its own right. We are far from possessing either a fully developed methodology of structural research, or a comprehensive typology of structural principles, or a morphology of textual structures. However, there is no text or text-type in the Old Testament which is not structured. This fact alone is sufficient to call for a programmatic unfolding of the method of structural interpretation within form criticism.

(a) In order to establish a basis for the identification of schemes or patterns behind the texts, form criticism has to address itself first of all to the structural interpretation of the texts themselves. This has recently been advocated especially by Güttgemanns and Richter. Assuming that texts are entities, we are concerned with the factors which constitute such entities.⁹³ One of the main ways of finding these factors or prin-

92. Instead of an endless bibliography, suffice it to refer to Hans Naumann editor, *Der moderne Strukturbegriff* (Darmstadt, Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1973).

93. This assumption points to the hermeneutical function of a unit as an integrated whole or entity, and not as an accumulation of pieces. Its modality is different from that of its parts or their summary. It has its own meaning. In it, the parts are determined by the entity, and not the entity by its parts. Such entity is based on a presupposed concept without which the parts would not be used the way they are, without which it would not exist, and which is decisive for its understanding. This insight is the decisive reason for the need of the exact delimitation of the text-units. Cf. Muilenburg, *op. cit.*, p. 9; Güttgemanns, *Offene Fragen*, pp. 184ff.

ciples is structural analysis. Form-critical understanding of structure is, therefore, different in that it investigates that kind of structure which is the basis for the formation of a text and into which a text is cast. It asks for the structure of the text as *text*.

Examples chosen from the many possibilities may help to indicate the range of structural principles which may govern a text. *Rhetorical or stylistic devices* can govern texts: the acrostic poem, the parallelismus membrorum, regardless of what kind; the word association; the inversion; the meter; the chiasm,⁹⁴ and others.⁹⁵ A text-entity can be governed by certain (*institutional*) *patterns* such as the decalogue (Exodus 20), the trial = rib (Hosea 2; Jeremiah 2), the itinerary (Deuteronomy 1—3),⁹⁶ the messenger commission or messenger speech, the seven-day week (Genesis 1:1-2:4a), contract or covenant, ordeal (Numbers 5), ritual (Leviticus 1—7), building blueprint (Exodus 25—27). A text can be governed by a certain kind of *systematic* viewpoint such as process of thought, climax and anti-climax, case and consequence (in the casuistic laws, in dynamistic and wisdom thought, in judicial and prophetic texts), a systematized creed or a central theme. This is especially true for larger compositions such as Isaiah 1; Amos 7—9; Hosea 1—3; Deuteronomy 12; Exodus 21:12—27.⁹⁷

One of the special problem areas concerning structural analysis is that of the *narrative texts*. It seems as if here, structural interpretation has only recently begun to make serious inroads. We have a few significant examples of the kinds of factors which may govern narrative plots. An author's arrangement of events may be dictated by an intended climax,⁹⁸ by a sequence of historical events (as perhaps in II Kings 9f.), by a

94. Cf. Yehuda T. Radday, "Chiasm in Tora," *Linguistica Biblica* 19 (1972), pp. 12-23.

95. Muilenburg, "Form criticism and Beyond," pp. 88ff.

96. Cf. George W. Coats, "The Wilderness Itinerary," *CBQ*, 34:135-52 (1972).

97. The often repeated qualification of such compositions as "Verschriftung" by a "Redactor" is not satisfactory. Quite apart from our revised understanding of those "Redactors," this qualification rests on the antiquated assumption that only oral texts or generically pure ones are worthy of form-critical attention. Unavoidably, however, we possess an unlimited number of literary compositions melting heterogeneous genres, genre-elements, or traditions into new entities. And unless one surmises that people were thinking only when speaking, but ceased to do so when writing, one has to take these new literary—and perhaps even originally oral—entities seriously.

98. Cf. the superb interpretation in this regard of Genesis 22 by Erich Auerbach, *Mimesis*, trans. by Willard R. Trask (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1953), pp. 3ff. Gerhard von Rad, *Das Opfer des Abraham*, (München, Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1971), pp. 16-23.

certain synopsis of the events (as perhaps in I Kings 22), or a theological concern (Gen. 18:16—33); by patterns of family-relationships,⁹⁹ or by a focus on existential concerns as in some narratives in the primeval history. Research has provided us a few examples, but not a comprehensive methodology.¹⁰⁰ We have not mentioned the problem of the hierarchy of structural factors present in a text. Details of structure may point up subordinate interests within the framework of the main structure.¹⁰¹

The examples given above indicate the great diversity of structural principles and their unpredictability. And they show one thing very clearly: The structure governing a text-entity can be discovered only on the basis of close textual analysis which demonstrates the inherent framework from evidence in the text itself. This does not exclude the search for patterns, types, schemes, or genres. But it makes sure that the identifiable patterns are those indicated by the structure of text-entities, and not those imposed on them by partial association. Form criticism has been interested in typical structures and has generally tended to relegate the interpretation of the uniqueness of texts to subsequent exegesis. However, it seems necessary to reverse this approach: *Not only must the structural analysis of the individuality of texts be included into the form-critical method, it must, in fact, precede the analysis of the typical structure if the claim that such a typicality inherently determines an individual text is to be substantiated.*¹⁰²

(b) Text structures are typical if they show signs of supra-individuality. The typical structure can consist in formulaic language, artistic rhetorical devices, a set of colloquialisms, an institutionalized scheme, a set of ideas, and more. It can be fixed or flexible. In other words, it can

99. Cf. Claus Westermann, *Arten der Erzählung*, pp. 58-89.

100. Very valuable are Klaus Koch, *Growth*, pp. 111-58, 183-210; Wolfgang Richter, *Berufungsberichte*, pp. 40ff., 53; the same, *Traditionsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen zum Richterbuch*, BBB 18 (Bonn, Hanstein, 1963), pp. 13, 20; Hannelis Schulte, *Die Entstehung der Geschichtsschreibung im alten Israel*, BZAW 128 (Berlin, Walter de Gruyter, 1972), pp. 33, 60, 181-202.

101. The deficiency in Old Testament studies becomes particularly apparent in view of the research in related fields. See, for example, Jurij M. Lotman, *Die Struktur des künstlerischen Textes* (Suhrkamp Verlag, 1973), and Erhardt Güttgemanns, "Einleitende Bemerkungen zur strukturalen Erzählforschung," *Linguistica Biblica* 23/24 (1973) 2-47, whose article I received while writing these very lines.

102. This proposal is basically in agreement with the sequence of methodological steps proposed by Richter, *Exegese*; cf. esp. his section on form and forms, pp. 120ff.

appear in various guises.¹⁰³ Most of the above mentioned examples of text-structures are, in fact, typical structures of different kinds.

It is well recognized that traces of typical patterns appear in texts. But we need not discuss the presence of such genre elements here, since they do not govern a text in its entirety. We must, however, pay attention to a less-recognized fact: The entirety of a text may be governed by more than one typical structure. A psalm can follow a rhetorical pattern (acrostic, strophe, verse) and at the same time the typical structure of a traditional theme, or a liturgical event. The question is, therefore, how these structural types interact. What is the *hierarchy* of their relations to each other? And then, which of them governs the others and ultimately the structural type of the text?

Finally, the structure of a unique text must be compared with the typical structure on which it rests. Both structures can coincide. More often, they vary. The degree of congruency or incongruency shows the degree to which the conventional influence has kept the individual expression under control, or to which the individuality created its own and often new mode of communication while availing itself of the conventional.¹⁰⁴

2. Text, Text-type, and Genre. In view of the interrelationship of the factors that contribute to the form-critical interpretation of texts, it is

103. The differences in understanding the nature of "structure" would need careful analysis. Westermann's "basic forms of prophetic speech" or Baltzer's "covenant formula" are typical structures that exist on the level of societal or institutional language. Richter's "structural model" points to a dimension behind language. And so does the notion of the structuralists, who view that dimension as a manifestation of trans-cultural thought. For them, "structure is not the model but that which expressed itself in the formula by which the model is transformed" (Paul Beauchamp, "L'analyse structurale et l'exégèse biblique," *Suppl. Vet. Test.* 22:113-28 (1972), esp. p. 121.) This formula, or code, never appears in language. It can only be reconstituted through analysis of language. In view of the different concepts it seems important to assert, for the time being, that the *reality* of linguistic patterns on the level of social communication cannot be denied.

104. The discussion whether texts are governed either by the typical or by the unique is pointless when the alternatives are posed this way. Form critics have long known that the ways in which typical patterns are recognized are flexible. But it is not enough to treat this phenomenon casually. The distinctiveness of each individual occurrence of a genre is a real factor of its existence, which must be accounted for in its interpretation. Weiss, accusing Westermann for "crushing" Psalm 74 and depriving it of "its truth" (p. 98) is right when insisting that texts must be interpreted in their present form. But his statement that the traditions in texts are "nothing but raw-materials" (p. 94) for the poet, and his complete unwillingness to even discuss typical forms and their influence on a text, is not convincing either. In spite of many good observations, especially his insistence on the priority of structure analysis, the method as outlined by him does not yet reflect a "Total-Interpretation" (cf. Meir Weiss, "Die Methode der 'Total-Interpretation'," *Suppl. Vet. Test.* 22:88-112, (1972)).

important that we realize some potential distinctions between typical structure, text-type, and genre. For when we ask about the typicality of a text, we are obviously confronted with several possibilities. The typicality of a text can consist in a typical structure. In some cases the structure is the matrix of the text-type, regardless of the varying contents as, for example, in the decalogues. The typicality of a text can also be influenced by its setting, regardless of the structure. This is the case, for example, in a sermon or an instruction. A certain concern or occupation of mind can govern the typicality of a text, regardless of both the settings and the structures through which it is expressed. The memorabilia are examples of this. Also the domination of a certain motif could constitute the typicality. Thus the typicality of a text, its text-type, can depend on one or another of the various factors which form criticism has regarded as representative of the typical. It depends on *which* factor is ultimately constitutive for the existence of a text.

These statements have consequences for the use of genre. If genre is understood as a "structural scheme" then we must account for other typicalities by which texts are governed. In this case, it would be helpful for us to distinguish between the categories of genre and of text-type. This would allow us to identify that typicality by which a given text is governed even when structure is not the dominant factor. If, however, genre is understood as that kind of typicality by which a text is governed, it would mean the same as text-type, and both terms could be used interchangeably.

In either case, our methodology should provide us with such a kind of flexibility that enables us to detect realistically those typical factors to which texts owe their existence. This does not at all mean that the genuine form-critical questions are discarded; it does mean that their usage will depend on the situation in a text, rather than on any preconceived methodological pattern. They will be used as tools, either separately or in concert, for the discovery of the typical factors, how they are hierarchically related, and how they influence individual texts.

3. Text and Setting. A few remarks are necessary in view of recent developments in the discussion of setting. Originally, setting was meant to be the oral societal—in a word, institutional—origin of genres.¹⁰⁵ But

105. Cf. Koch, *Growth*, pp. 26-38.

the more one recognized that all of the Old Testament literature could not be explained on this basis, the more the understanding of setting was broadened and differentiated. Richter differentiates between three sorts of setting: institutions, the style of an epoch, and literature itself.¹⁰⁶ "Setting" may not be the word for all of these categories, but spelling out the different connotations implied in this modified concept of setting is more important than the terminological problem.

First of all, we are now talking of settings of different sorts. True, setting can still be, and often is, the creative institutional matrix within which genres, or types, and individual texts exist. Rituals are a case in point. In these cases, the relationship between setting on the one hand and genre, text-type, or text on the other is understood genetically. This has been the genuine form-critical assumption.

The style of an epoch can also be understood as a matrix insofar as it furnishes the codes or the raw materials—the typical categories of communication—employed by a certain society. The characteristics of an historical period do not necessarily define any "institutional" settings within epoch, nor do they identify the types of expression which correspond to institutional settings. Nor is the style of an age necessarily the formative factor for all its units of linguistic expression. It is more the context than the cause of both types and specific units. The word "matrix" denotes in this case only the general societal background of both genres and texts. But it does not explain that kind of matrix which is the real cause of either a specific text-type or a specific text nor the reason for their existence. Such a matrix explains the function of types or texts only in terms of their general intelligibility. But it does not explain them in terms of the causes and concerns involved in their specific settings, or in terms of the intentionality of specific texts.¹⁰⁷

What has been said about settings of different sorts is especially true

106. *Exegese als Literaturwissenschaft*, pp. 145ff.

107. The book by H. W. Wolff, *Amos the Prophet* (Philadelphia, Fortress Press, 1973) is a case in point. Wolff argues that Amos can best be understood on the basis of his "hereditary cultural background" (p. 89), his *geistige Heimat*. Cf. the title of the German original: *Amos' geistige Heimat, WMANT 18* (Neukirchen, Neukirchener Verlag, 1964). Here we have "matrix"-language in its genuine form-critical sense. But the background is *geistig*. This interpretation explains, indeed, the general mentality and the language within which and—to a certain degree—the criteria upon which Amos operated. But this *geistige Heimat* neither explains the setting of Amos' prophecy nor the typically prophetic in his appearance. It does not touch upon the function or intentionality of his specific messages at all. After all, Amos appeared as a prophet and not as a wise man.

with regard to language itself. Language can be a setting of its own, so to speak, following its own rules. Language as such is a sort of setting which can be correlated with, or remain distinct from, the kinds of setting form criticism has been talking about. And it may well be that future research will discover text-types or texts whose matrix is language itself rather than certain institutions of the style of an epoch.¹⁰⁸ This may be the case particularly . . . genuine literary compositions.

Secondly, we are not only talking about different sorts of setting but also about different categories related to setting: setting *of* a structural scheme, *of* other text-types, and *of* texts. Settings are not only governed by and identified with typical *schemes*: They are not only the matrices of *patterns*, they can also be governed by other typicalities such as typical concerns or a typical occupation of mind, which come to expression in a variety of patterns. In this regard we have not even mentioned the question of the setting of individual texts, either in their written or their oral stage. There is reason to believe that individual texts are dependent not only on typical settings, but at least as much on the specific situations to which they owe their existence. The definition of the setting of a text-type, or a genre, is not necessarily identical with the definition of the setting of one of its unique manifestations.

Finally, it is generally known that text-types can be used in various settings. They are freely available. Hence the recognition of a text-type does not automatically reveal the setting in which it was used. Failure to distinguish between genuine and actual settings of text-types in an exegesis will lead to a distorted understanding of a text.

Therefore, when focusing on setting we must not only distinguish between various kinds of setting that are possible, and between the various ways in which those kinds may affect the same text-type or a text. We must also distinguish between the factors by which settings are governed and identified, and we must distinguish between genuine and actual settings when exegeting texts. *The conclusion seems inevitable that form criticism is heading towards a typology of setting.*

In such a typology, a monolithic conceptualization of setting must be avoided, and certainly its imposition in principle on all texts for the purpose of their generic classification. Instead, setting should serve as a heuristic tool to identify the kinds of settings of genres, text-types, and

108. Cf. Richter, *Exegese*, p. 145, n.54.

texts. It should show the various functions of settings for the text-types, and the degree of their interdependence with these text-types.¹⁰⁹

In sum, we should be able to apply the category of setting under the dictate of the manifold situations of texts, and not under a dogmatic concept of setting to which the interpretation of texts is subjected.

4. Lack of space forbids us to elaborate in detail on a last major area involved in the form-critical interpretation of texts. It is signalized by such words as content, mood, occupation of mind, function, and intention. The range of problems implied in this area is enormous. It has so far eluded a comprehensive, methodological scrutiny.¹¹⁰ A clarification of these sometimes controversial—often uncritically applied—categories is necessary for them to be useful.

In the first place, we need an exact delimitation of the meanings of these categories. "Mood," "content," and "occupation of mind" mean different things. The same is true for "function" (e.g. the way a genre, or a text-type or text operates in a communication event) and "intention" or "intentionality" (e.g. the goal a speaker or writer wants to achieve, or the goal a text achieves). One cannot say that the ramifications of defining each of these categories are sufficiently explored.

Secondly, we need to make clear that each of these categories can be applied to either genre or text-type or text or parts within texts. The function of a genuine genre can be completely different from the function of this genre in a text or from the function of a text. The function of a text can be explained diachronically (in terms of its traditional type) or synchronically (in terms of its context).

Thirdly, we need an analysis telling us how these categories are interdependent in genres, text-types, and texts. As various aspects of genre, text-type, and text what do they contribute to understanding each of these as a whole, and which aspect is dominant in a given case?

And, finally, we need to assess their role in a concerted interpretation of structure, genre (etc.), and setting.

The task outlined here indicates once more a multiplicity of theoretical possibilities. To outline such a multiplicity is one thing. But to

109. See, concerning the problem of interdependence, what has been said under I.

110. In spite of the fact that especially "function" or "intention" are frequently referred to in exegetical studies, the form-critical methodology generally has not given these categories the attention they deserve in the method. Richter (*Exegese*, pp. 66ff., 117f., 145ff., 163ff., 169ff.) and Tucker (*Form Criticism*, pp. 12ff., 51ff., 77) are noteworthy exceptions.

employ it in the exegetical process means that we have to expect varying results. The methodological outline must, therefore, make sure that it is designed so as to avoid preempting the results.

Conclusion

It is well known that Gunkel's program for Old Testament scholarship—to write a history of the Old Testament literature—has not been fulfilled to date.¹¹¹ On the surface it might seem as if the execution of Gunkel's plan was only a matter of time and personnel. After all, form criticism has amassed an impressive record since Gunkel. But the reasons for the failure may lie deeper than that.

What Gunkel had in mind was mainly a history of the Old Testament genres.¹¹² Our review, however, of the problems inherent in the form-critical method seems to indicate that just this conceptualization of the task may not be sufficient for achieving the goal. Form criticism has employed a monolithic conception of genre and assumed the homogeneity of the typical factors inherent in it. This may—paradoxically—have been counter-productive to its own original intentions. To some extent it may have caused the discipline to lose sight of the conditions of the living process to which language and literature are subjected. The historical manifestations of typical forms, especially the interrelationship of the various typicalities in linguistic entities, and their influence on individual texts seem to be more flexible than form criticism has been prepared to assume. This must be said at least in view of the whole of the Old Testament literature. We do not suggest that our ancient literature be exegeted on principles which the interpretation of modern literature demands. But recent progress in the methods for interpretation of language and literature does shed new light on the problems which form criticism has faced with its own texts.

In view of this, interpreting Old Testament literature and language ought to be within a context in which both appear as manifestations of communication, born by a will to communicate and functioning within such communication; that is, they include the horizon of understanding and expectation of readers and listeners and, having a historical dimension, are subject to the changing horizons in communication.

111. Cf. Klatt, *Hermann Gunkel*, pp. 166-192.

112. Cf. Klatt's citation of Gunkel, *ibid.*, p. 170.

Within the concept of such a historical sociology of language, the role of form criticism would be to employ its tools heuristically. It would have to ask what, in a given text, constituted the communication event between writer and readers, between speaker and listener in a typical way. It would have to ask how the typical factors were related to one another and how the typical and the unique interact. This certainly means that answers will be found which confirm many results found in the traditional sense. But it means also that we are no longer stuck with the expectation of a distinct typicality in a text when such a typicality may never have been constitutive for its existence. The communication event in a text may be constituted by the typicality of a genre understood in a certain way or it may function through some other typicality or it may be governed by none whatsoever. We can leave such determinations to subsequent findings. Such findings may occasionally show that a text is governed by factors beyond those asked for by the form-critical method, for example, by a thematic concern or a motif.¹¹³ Even so, the form-critical tools will be indispensable for the understanding of the texts wherever the texts are predisposed to their application. By being subservient to those factors that dominate texts rather than by dominating the texts through its own methodological system, form criticism will, probably with some kind of new face, continue to have its unique role in the concert of the exegetical disciplines.¹¹⁴

113. In this context, the word motif does not refer to "an elementary and distinct part of a poetic work, with the emphasis on 'part'" (Koch, *Growth*, p. 56). Rather, it refers to "leading-motif" (German: *Leitmotiv*): "any repetition that helps unify a work by potentially recalling its earlier occurrence and all that surrounded it" (S. Barnet—M. Berman—W. Burton, *A Dictionary of Literary Terms* [Boston-Toronto, Little, Brown and Company, 1960]).

114. For assistance of various kinds I am greatly indebted to the members of the research staff of the form criticism project at the Institute for Antiquity and Christianity, Claremont Graduate School: Mrs. Eleanor Johnston, Antony Campbell S.J., Michael Floyd, and Fred Tiffany.